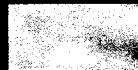


SENATE EDUCATION

EXHIBIT NO. 3

DATE 1-10-11

BILL NO. SB3



MONTANA GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON HISTORIC AND CULTURAL PROPERTIES

REPORT TO THE 60TH LEGISLATURE 2007

On August 15, 2005 Governor Schweitzer signed Executive Order 18 creating a seven-member Historic and Cultural Advisory Council. Chaired by Lt. Governor John Bohlinger, the Council was charged with studying the benefits of historic preservation and formulating recommendations to the Governor and the 2007 Legislature concerning the State of Montana's policies on the preservation of publicly-owned historic buildings. The Council also identified opportunities for communities to use historic preservation as an economic development tool.

SB0003 Testimony

10 January 2011

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman & members of the committee. I'm Patty Dean, a Partner in the Field for the National Trust for Historic Preservation & Director of Community Preservation for the Montana Preservation Alliance. Both the National Trust for Historic Preservation, chartered by the United States Congress in 1949, & the MT Preservation Alliance, a statewide nonprofit established in 1987, are dedicated to providing "...leadership, education, advocacy & resources to save [our] diverse historic places & revitalize our communities."

The 1966 National Historic Preservation Act established State Historic Preservation Offices in every state, including Montana, whose Preservation Office is headquartered at the Montana Historical Society. Montana & forty-one other states have laws to protect historic buildings, landscapes & other cultural resources. Across the US, state funding for historic preservation varies—revenue from lotteries, gaming taxes, license plate fees, state investment interest, etc.-- as does the effectiveness of these preservation agencies.

For nearly 25 years, the National Trust & the MT Preservation Alliance have collaborated to safeguard & document Montana's historic buildings & landscapes while maximizing positive economic consequences. This past October, the National Trust bestowed its Honor Award upon the MT House Appropriations Committee, the MT Senate Finance Committee, Governor Schweitzer & the MT Preservation Alliance for their visionary leadership in the passage of HB645 which applied federal stimulus money to historic preservation. Montana was the only state to do so.

^{For}
Two years previous, the Governor's Council on Historic & Cultural Properties examined the economic & historic benefits of historic preservation of publicly-owned properties & outlined recommendations in its 2007 report to the Legislature. One of the strategies detailed in the report was "to develop policies that encourage state agencies to maintain & use heritage properties."

I am testifying today in support of a specific policy from that report that has taken form in Senate Bill 0003 which will “ensure the state’s ongoing stewardship” of hundreds of historic state properties throughout Montana. The architectural styles & materials used in these properties embody Montana history but, perhaps even more critically, document the presence & relationship of territorial & statehood era governments in our communities. These heritage properties range from the Department of Commerce’s Virginia City—which not only draws tourists from around the world but also provides a “living laboratory” for budding architectural history & social history students-- to the Department of Public Health & Human Services’ Old Soldier’s Home (now the Montana Veterans’ Home) in Columbia Falls sited there by the State Board of Review in 1895, fourteen years before the town was incorporated. For many Montana cities & towns, such ^{state-owned} historic properties are much more than local landmarks; they often exemplify the very reason for the town’s existence & even today drive the local economy & culture.

Further, the Education & Local Government Interim Committee recognized the State of Montana’s responsibility “for maintaining the heritage properties owned by the state & managed by agencies on behalf of the public”. SB0003’s requirement for the compilation & reporting of inventories, assessments, & management recommendations on the many state-owned heritage properties would not only fulfill the State’s responsibility but also provide centralized, transparent information & a mechanism for cross-agency collaboration. Given nearly every agency oversees some type of heritage property, such information would greatly assist in nearly every state agency’s risk management & long-range planning: data is good!

Montanans prize their communities’ history & the resources that bear witness to those histories as illustrated by the tremendous response to the HB645 grants program. One hundred thirty-six applicants, from Big Arm to Sun River & Glasgow to Hardin, requested over \$20 million of the \$4 million available.

I would like to close with a quote ^{from} when the National Trust presented its Honor Award to the Montana Legislature, Governor Schweitzer & the Montana Preservation Alliance: “[The National Trust] praises ‘the vision of elected & appointed officials who support preservation

projects & legislation in their communities....who help Americans [& Montanans] understand the value of preservation. All demonstrate commitment, leadership & achievement worthy of national recognition.”

Let us continue to demonstrate these qualities with the passage of SB0003. Thank you.